

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A polymer composition, comprising:

a block copolymer (a) comprising

a polymer block A, which ~~is composed~~ comprises mainly of an α -methylstyrene, and

a hydrogenated or unhydrogenated polymer block B, which ~~is composed of~~ comprises a conjugated diene ~~or isobutylene~~ and has a weight average molecular weight of 30,000 to 200,000;

an acrylic resin (b) which is a homopolymer of methyl methacrylate or a copolymer comprising methyl methacrylate as the major component and copolymerizable monomers selected from the group consisting of (meth)acrylic acid, metal salts of (meth)acrylic acid, (meth)acrylic acid esters, vinyl acetate, aromatic vinyl compounds, maleic anhydride, maleimide compounds and mixtures thereof; and

optionally, a softener (c); and

wherein proportions (by mass) of respective components in the polymer composition are such that each of the following relationships (1) and (2) holds:

$$0.05 < W_b/W_a < 2 \quad (1) \text{ and}$$

$$W_c/(W_a + W_b + W_c) < 0.5 \quad (2)$$

wherein W_a , W_b , and W_c represent the amounts (by mass) of the block copolymer (a), the acrylic resin (b) and the softener (c), respectively.

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): The polymer composition according to claim 1, wherein the block copolymer (a) comprises:

(1) a polymer block A ~~composed~~ comprising mainly of an α -methylstyrene and having a weight average molecular weight of 1,000 to 50,000; and

(2) a polymer block B including a block b1 that has a weight average molecular weight of 1,000 to 30,000, and in which less than 30% of the conjugated diene units to constitute the block are linked via 1,4-linkages, and a block b2 that has a weight average molecular weight of 25,000 to 190,000, and in which 30% or more of the conjugated diene units to constitute the block are linked via 1,4-linkages; and

wherein the block copolymer (a) includes at least one A-b1-b2 structure.

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): The polymer composition according to claim 1, wherein the polymer composition has a morphology in which the block copolymer (a) forms a continuous phase (matrix) and the acrylic resin (b) forms particles having an average particle size of 0.2 μ m or less, that are dispersed throughout the continuous phase, forming sea-island structures, the block copolymer (a) having the polymer block A ~~composed~~ comprising mainly of an α -methylstyrene, and the hydrogenated or unhydrogenated polymer block B ~~composed of~~ comprising the conjugated diene ~~or isobutylene~~, the block copolymer (a) having a weight average molecular weight of 30,000 to 200,000.

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): A stretchable material, ~~formed of~~ comprising: the polymer composition according to claim 1.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): The stretchable material according to claim 4, wherein the stretchable material is provided in the form of a film, strand, band, or nonwoven fabric ~~formed of~~ comprising the polymer composition.

Claim 6 (Previously Presented): The stretchable material according to claim 4, wherein the stretchable material yields a 0.8MPa or larger stress when formed into a 1mm thick, No.2 dumbbell-molded sample piece, according to JIS K 6251, and stretched by 50% at a test speed of 20mm/min at 25°C, with the grip distance of 70mm, and gives a 50% or higher stress retention after held under the conditions for 2 hours.

Claim 7 (Currently Amended): A laminate, comprising:
a layer ~~formed of~~ comprising the polymer composition according to claim 1, and
a layer ~~formed of~~ comprising a different material.

Claim 8 (Original): The laminate according to claim 7, wherein the different material is a thermoplastic resin.

Claim 9 (Original): The laminate according to claim 8, wherein the different material comprises at least one thermoplastic resin selected from the group consisting of olefin-based resin, olefin-based thermoplastic elastomer, styrene-based thermoplastic elastomer, and a resin composition containing a styrene-based thermoplastic elastomer.

Claim 10 (Currently Amended): A laminate, comprising:
an outermost layer ~~formed of~~ comprising the polymer composition according to claim 1, and

a layer ~~formed of~~ comprising a different material.

Claim 11 (Currently Amended): A foam composition, comprising:
the polymer composition according to claim 1, and
a blowing agent (d), and wherein the blowing agent (d) is contained in a proportion
(by mass), such that the following relationship (3) holds:

$$0.01 < Wd/(Wa + Wb + Wc) < 0.1 \quad (3)$$

wherein Wa, Wb, Wc, and Wd represent the amounts (by mass) of the block
copolymer (a), the acrylic resin (b), the softener (c), and the blowing agent (d) that together
form the foam composition, respectively.

Claim 12 (Original): A foam obtained by foaming the foam composition according
to claim 11.

Claim 13 (Previously Presented): The polymer composition according to claim 2,
wherein the polymer composition has a morphology in which the block copolymer (a) forms
a continuous phase (matrix) and the acrylic resin (b) forms particles having an average
particle size of 0.2 μ m or less, that are dispersed throughout the continuous phase, forming
sea-island structures, the block copolymer (a) having the polymer block A ~~composed~~
comprising mainly of an α -methylstyrene, and the hydrogenated or unhydrogenated polymer
block B ~~composed of~~ comprising the conjugated diene or isobutylene, the block copolymer
(a) having a weight average molecular weight of 30,000 to 200,000.

Claim 14 (Currently Amended): A stretchable material, ~~formed of~~ comprising:
the polymer composition according to claim 2.

Claim 15 (Currently Amended): A stretchable material, ~~formed of~~ comprising:
the polymer composition according to claim 3.

Claim 16 (Currently Amended): A laminate, comprising:
a layer ~~formed of~~ comprising the polymer composition according to claim 2, and
a layer ~~formed of~~ comprising a different material.

Claim 17 (Currently Amended): A laminate, comprising:
a layer ~~formed of~~ comprising the polymer composition according to claim 3, and
a layer ~~formed of~~ comprising a different material.

Claim 18 (Currently Amended): A laminate, comprising:
an outermost layer ~~formed of~~ comprising the polymer composition according to claim
2, and
a layer ~~formed of~~ comprising a different material.

Claim 19 (Currently Amended): A laminate, comprising:
an outermost layer ~~formed of~~ comprising the polymer composition according to claim
3, and
a layer ~~formed of~~ comprising a different material.

Claim 20 (Currently Amended): A foam composition, comprising:

the polymer composition according to claim 2, and a blowing agent (d), and wherein the blowing agent (d) is contained in a proportion (by mass), such that the following relationship (3) holds:

$$0.01 < Wd/(Wa + Wb + Wc) < 0.1 \quad (3)$$

wherein W_a , W_b , W_c , and W_d represent the amounts (by mass) of the block copolymer (a), the acrylic resin (b), the softener (c), and the blowing agent (d) that together form the foam composition, respectively.

Application No.: 10/509,681

Reply to the Office Action dated: October 14, 2005

BASIS FOR THE AMENDMENT

The claims have been amended to correct minor informalities. In addition, the amendment of Claim 1 is supported by paragraphs [0077] and [0080], Examples 1 and 3 of the US publication of this application (US 2005/0239963).

No new matter is believed to have been added by entry of this amendment. Entry and favorable reconsideration are respectfully requested.

Upon entry of this amendment Claims 1-20 will now be active in this application.

INTERVIEW SUMMARY

Applicants wish to thank Examiner Mullis for the helpful and courteous discussion with Applicants' Representative on December 14, 2005. During this discussion it was noted that component (c) is optional. The claim has been amended accordingly. In addition, it was discussed that the amendment of component (b) overcomes Tomoki et al and Kobayashi et al because isobutylene has been deleted from the claims and component (b) has been further specified.